

### REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9 and 14-26 are currently pending. Claims 1, 4, 14, and 17 have been amended; Claims 10-13 have been canceled without prejudice; and Claims 23-26 have been added by the present amendment. The changes and additions to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, the title of the invention was objected to as being non-descriptive of the claimed invention; Claims 10-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, regarding "the image data" limitation; Claims 10-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,445,404 to Kerby et al. (hereinafter "the '404 patent"); Claims 1-7 and 14-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,091,512 to Sasanuma et al. (hereinafter "the '512 patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,379,126 to Seto et al. (hereinafter "the '126 patent"); and Claims 8, 9, 21, and 22 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants respectfully submit that the objection to the title is rendered moot by the present amendment to the specification. The title has been amended to be more descriptive of the claimed invention. Accordingly, the objection to the title is believed to have been overcome.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claims 10-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is rendered moot by the present cancellation of those claims.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claims 10-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 is rendered moot by the present cancellation of those claims.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to an image apparatus forming an image by performing scanning by deflecting a light beam, the image forming apparatus comprising: (1) an image input part configured to input image data obtained from scanning each scan line of an original image; and (2) a data conversion part that converts a resolution of the image data input by the image input part. Further, amended Claim 1 recites that the image input part inputs, to the data conversion part, one scan line of the image data a plurality of times in succession; and that the data conversion part converts the resolution into a resolution different for each input scan line. Claim 1 has been amended for the purpose of clarification only and no new matter has been added.<sup>1</sup>

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claim 1 (and dependent Claims 2 and 3) is rendered moot by the present amendment to Claim 1.

Regarding the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), the Office Action asserts that the '512 patent discloses everything in Claim 1 with the exception of the input image being multi-bit input image data, and relies on the '126 patent to remedy that deficiency.

The '512 patent is directed to an image processing apparatus that subjects image input data to a density conversion in accordance with different predetermined conversion characteristics contained in a look-up table. In particular, as shown in Figure 4, the '512 patent discloses that the dot separation circuits 408-410 carry out tone conversion for each line of the image data. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '512 patent fails to disclose that one scan line of the image data is input to the data conversion part a plurality of times in succession, wherein the data conversion part converts the resolution into a resolution different for each input scan line, as recited in amended Claim 1. Rather, the '512 patent merely discloses that data conversion is carried out for each different scan line.

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., page 20, line 16 through page 22, line 22 of the specification and Figures 2, 5, and 6.

The '126 patent is directed to an image processing method and apparatus including input means for inputting multi-value pixel data and density generating means for generating density tone data based on the multi-value pixel data input by the input means. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the '126 patent fails to disclose that one scan line of image data is input to the data conversion part a plurality of times in succession, wherein the data conversion part converts the resolution into a resolution different for each input scan line, as recited in amended Claim 1.

Thus, no matter how the teachings of the '512 and '126 patents are combined, the combination does not teach or suggest that one scan line of image data is input by the input part to the data conversion part a plurality of times in succession, and that the data conversion part converts the resolution into a resolution different for each input scan line, as recited in Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claim 1 (and dependent Claims 2 and 3) patentably define over any proper combination of the '512 and '126 patents.

Independent Claims 4, 14, and 17 recite limitations analogous to the limitations recited in Claim 1. Moreover, Claims 4, 14, and 17 have been amended in a manner analogous to the amendment to Claim 1. In particular, Claim 4 recites a plurality of data conversion parts configured to convert, for each of a plurality of light beams, a resolution of the image data using different conversion operations. Accordingly, for the reasons stated above for the patentability of Claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of Claims 4, 14, and 17 (and all similarly rejected dependent claims) are rendered moot by the present amendment to Claims 4, 14, and 17.

The present amendment also sets forth new Claims 23-26 for examination on the merits. New Claims 23 and 24, which depend from independent Claims 1 and 4, respectively, recite that the data conversion part is configured to convert the resolution of the image data input by the image input part to be a higher resolution. In addition, new

independent Claim 25 is a method claim that recites limitations analogous to the limitations recited in Claim 1. Further, new Claim 26, which depends from new Claim 25, recites limitations analogous to the limitations recited in new Claims 23 and 24. Accordingly, new Claims 23-26 are supported by the originally filed specification and do not add new matter. In addition, based on the reasons stated above for the patentability of Claims 1 and 4, Applicants respectfully submit that new Claims 23-26 patentably define over any proper combination of the '512 and '126 patents.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 4, 14, 17, and 25 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over any proper combination of the '404, '512, and '126 patents.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

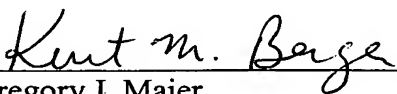
Respectfully submitted,

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